

MINUTES
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission Meeting
Helena Headquarters
1420 East 6th Avenue - Helena, MT 59620
CONFERENCE CALL
July 24, 2006

Commission Members Present: Steve Doherty, Chairman; Tim Mulligan, Vice-Chairman; Shane Colton; John Brenden.

Fish, Wildlife & Parks Staff: Acting Director Sue Daly; Bob Lane; Ken McDonald and Betty Warren.

The Associated Press was contacted, but declined to participate.

Chairman Doherty called the conference call meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

1. Emergency Fishing Closure – Jefferson River. Chairman Doherty requested an update on the consideration of issuing an emergency closure of the Jefferson River and the action being requested by FWP.

Ken McDonald, Fisheries Division Fish Management Bureau Chief, advised the Commissioners that the Jefferson River has experienced low flows, and temperatures have exceeded 73° F for more than eight hours for several consecutive days. Per FWP's Drought Closure Policy, the closure threshold for salmonids is 3 consecutive days when daily maximum water temperature exceeds 73° F for some period of time. Because the temperature exceeded the threshold and the continued warm temperatures are anticipated, FWP requested the Commission invoke an emergency closure of fishing between noon and midnight effective immediately until further notice.

Action: Mulligan moved and Colton seconded the motion that the Jefferson River be closed to fishing between noon and midnight effective July 24, 2006, until further notice. Motion carried.

Bob Lane was questioned whether the Commission could delegate authority for additional closures to the Director on this call. Bob Lane recommended that since this item is already on the August 3, 2006 Commission agenda, they wait until then due to public notice requirements.

The Commissioners strongly recommended that the delegation of authority to close waters to fishing due to drought conditions be made permanent, or at least occur much earlier in the year.

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Steve Doherty, Chairman

Susan Daly, Acting Director